

# NEWSLETTER

14<sup>th</sup> May 2026



**Dear Everyone - Greetings to you all**

**I am the vine, you are the branches:** Last Sunday was the day of our Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). In connection with this Kamran spoke about how we, as branches on the vine, are growing. He asked us, “How are we growing spiritually in every dimension?”

He gave us 3 points to help us grow in faith.

**The first is;** to abide in Christ; to be rooted in him; to stay and dwell by being with him.

**The second is** to grow inwardly allowing God to transform us to bear more fruit. Praying makes for a greater life and fruitfulness to take away all the negative things in our life, to draw us into love and to all good dimensions. When God prunes us as branches on the vine, we find out what needs to be healed in us by growing outward bearing fruit for the world in ways we don't expect.

**The third is** by growing outwardly, knowing that Serving is not an optional extra. Paul talks in Ephesians 4:11, of how we each have gifts to give, that some are evangelists, prophets, teachers. The whole people of God are

called to Service, to be a gift to the Church. It is Important that we work together. Worship matters, prayer matters, scripture reading matters. We are all connected to the vine and and are seeking God's will.

Kamran asked us, "Where is God calling us to bear fruit? Who is it who needs our prayers, our love, our service all the time?"

**Nwando:** We were all devastated and saddened to hear at the service on Sunday that our beloved sister Nwando had died in the night. She was so loved by everyone for her sweet nature, her faithfulness and kindness towards us all. She was a wonderful example of how a human being should be; how a Christian is. We will miss her so much. We send our love and condolences to Tanwa, her daughter, son-in-law, Joe, her two sons, Jaiye and Bolaji, who have been with her through the past weeks. We were told she died peacefully having received the last rites from Kamran. May flights of Angels guide her to her rest.



Picture by Kelly

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM):** This Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> May, the important "Annual Parochial Church Meeting" took place after the Service. During the meeting all the events and happenings of the year were reported on, questions were asked and issues discussed. Two new church wardens were elected, Shaniv and Ifey. We congratulate them and wish them well for their future work for the Church and all of us. Members of the Church council were elected, with Alexis, Tony, Tim and Simon joining them. We welcomed our new church council and wish them well in their roles and responsibilities. Many thanks was given with much appreciation to different church members for all they have given in so many different ways throughout the year. Much thanks was given to Kamran and Naila for all they tirelessly do with such care and goodness throughout the year in their leadership and partnership. There are still packs at the side of the church of the reports for the year, so If you have not taken one you can get a hard copy. If you would like to see the minutes of the meeting so you can get a good idea of the discussions and questions, please contact, : [Tracey@gg-pc.co.uk](mailto:Tracey@gg-pc.co.uk).

**Nehar and Tony:** Much appreciation was expressed to Nehar and Tony who have been our churchwardens for many years and are now standing down from their role. They have given such faithful service to us and worked with dedication in all kinds of ways to keep the church in good order. While they will still be active in the church, for which we are grateful, they deserve a rest from the responsibilities of the church warden role. Again, thank you to you both from all of us.

**Responding to Terror:** One of the questions at the end of the APCM was regarding the recent attacks in Golders Green against the Jewish Community and how we are engaging with them. Kamran reported on the good links we have with the synagogues and faith leaders we have partnered, in, for example, the night-sleepers project. He told us of a meeting he went to with the police and a wide range of interested community and faith leaders shortly after the attacks. The minutes of the meeting are too long to publish in this newsletter but if you would like to read what took place please go to them on-line

<https://lbfm.uk/2026/05/07/responding-to-terror-community-insights-meeting/>.

If you would like a hard copy of the meeting there will be copies on the table at the side of the church, contact myself on Sunday or Tracey and ask her to provide one for you.



**St Julian of Norwich:** The feast day of Julian of Norwich (1343 – after 1416), was on the 8<sup>th</sup> May. She was known as Mother Julian and was an English anchoress of the Middle Ages. Her writings, now known as “The Revelations of Divine Love”, are the earliest surviving English language works by a woman. They are also the only surviving English language works by an anchoress. She is the most famous saint who had great struggles, sickness and visions of Christ. Below is an article about her written by Fr Richard Rohr, taken from his daily messages and meditations to those who receive them. Please note she will be the subject of the forthcoming Donald Barnes memorial Lecture in October (Details given below).

**St Paul’s Cathedral Newsletter to London Churches:** Below Patrick Craig gives his second reflection on the many brilliant hymns and music that, to him, express the love of God and our faith. This week he talks about the Alleluia songs of Ascension, especially “Ascendit Deus” composed by Peter Philips’, who lived in troublesome times in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and went through a great deal as a Roman Catholic in protestant times of persecution. Apparently he was saved by Queen Elizabeth 1st who liked the Christmas plays he put on with the Children of St Paul’s so much that she forgave his Catholic leanings! (You can hear Ascendit Deus by going to Google)



**What are your Favourite Hymns?:** Knowing how many of you love hymns and have your favourites, it is an apt exploration from St Paul's about loved hymns, one in which we too can join. Perhaps you could let me know what your favourite hymns or pieces of music are and I can include them in the newsletter. Martin Luther was very keen on hymns as he felt they were an important way of learning about our faith and wrote many.

**Listening and Learning, Bible Study:** The Bible Study will continue to take place each Thursday at 7.00pm pm. It will be held in church as usual but also on Zoom to enable those who cannot get to church to join in. The link is: **Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81391462394?pwd=Iw9o8zKMnoUjEx2TwGmOlwUm21F2V.1>  
 Meeting ID: 813 9146 2394 Passcode: 226547 --- One tap mobile  
 +12532050468,,81391462394#,,,,\*226547# US +12532158782,,81391462394#,,,,\*226547# US  
 (Tacoma) Join instructions  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/81391462394/invitations?signature=9LDb9LImnxkAbxeBXA-gdH3xLiUqIFvqZ2iPFwUE8ys>

**Coffee:** This enjoyable time takes place each Wednesday from 10.30am – 12 noon when we then have a short communion service. Everyone is welcome – cakes and conversation.

**Toddler Group:** **We badly need more helpers for this group.** If you are willing to give some time to help between 9.30 and 11.30am on Tuesdays, please let Kamran know on Sunday or contact him on: Kamran@gg-pc.co.uk or the church WhatsApp.

**Magnolia Court Care Home Meeting:** We were invited by Sarah Pratt - Home Services Advisor at Magnolia Court Care Home, 181 Granville Road, NW2 2LH. to come to a session on "Care Fees: A Planning Evening", with a local Care Fees Planning Specialist and a Solicitor when advice would be offered on guidance on Wills, Power of Attorney and Trust Planning. As the invitation came late I went along last Monday to hear what it was about. It was so good and very informative. I thought this is something we all should hear whatever age we are. There was so much helpful information and detail that my head was spinning and there was no way I could put the information in the newsletter for you, BUT, Rabeya, the lead person who took the session offered to come to us and take a session for us. I heartily recommend that we take up her kind offer and will try and see what would be the best time for us. Please indicate to me if this is something you would be interested in.

Sarah also invited us to a **fish and chip lunch one Friday at 1.00pm.** If you are interested they can take up to 12 guests at Magnolia Court. If we look at our diaries and agree to a Friday

date we could all go together and enjoy a fish and chip lunch. Please let me know if you are interested or email me on: [sally.barnes3@btopenworld.com](mailto:sally.barnes3@btopenworld.com)

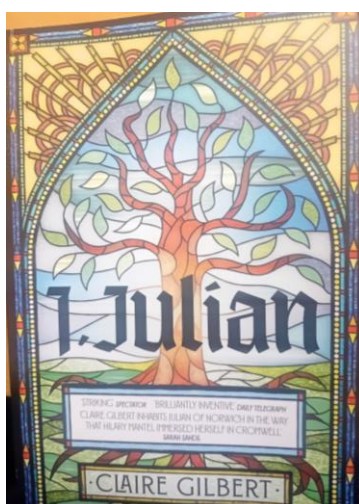
**Please note two dates for your diaries:**

**Sheila Grodzinski's Thanksgiving Service.** This will take place during the Sunday Service on **31<sup>st</sup> May**. Sheila's family will be present and it will be a fitting memorial for her and a remembrance of her long and faithful service to this church and other support she gave in the community. Please do come and support Sheila's family and give thanks for all she did for so many.

**Festival Day at St Alban's Cathedral for St Alban:** This will take place on St Alban's Day **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June**. Several people went last year and thoroughly enjoyed it. If we have enough lifts by car that will be great but of a large number would like to come Kamran will order a coach. If you would like to go please sign up as soon as possible and let Kamran know.

**Donald Barnes Memorial Lecture:** I know this is early but, please put the date in your diaries. You are invited to this year's address at St Peter's Belsize Park, NW3 that will be at **6.30pm** on **Tuesday 20 October at St Peter's Church, Belsize Square NW3 4HJ**. It will be given by, Dr Claire Gilbert, Visiting Professor at King's College London and Lay Canon at Norwich Cathedral. Claire has agreed to give the lecture this autumn on a theme around Julian of Norwich and ecological consciousness. Such an apt subject for our time. Claire is the author of the recent book *I Julian* (acclaimed by Rowan Williams among others). Those of us who are members of the Nazareth Community studied it last year with great enjoyment and learnt so much about Julian's life and theology.

Copies of *I Julian* will be ordered from Daunt's and will be available on the night.



**With love and good wishes – Sally**



## A Short Historical Background to Julian

Julian lived in the English city of Norwich, which was an important centre for commerce that also had a vibrant religious life. During her lifetime, the city suffered the devastating effects of the Black Death of 1348–1350, the Peasants' Revolt (which affected large parts of England in 1381), and the suppression of the Lollards. In 1373, aged 30 and so seriously ill she thought she was on her deathbed, Julian received a series of visions or shewings of the Passion of Christ. She recovered from her illness and wrote two versions of her experiences, the earlier one being completed soon after her recovery—a much longer version, today known as the Long Text, was written many years later.

Julian lived in permanent seclusion as an anchoress in her cell, which was attached to St Julian's Church, Norwich (and can be visited today) . Four wills are known in which sums were bequeathed to a Norwich anchoress named Julian, and an account by the celebrated mystic Margery Kempe exists which provides evidence of counsel Kempe was given by the anchoress.

Details of Julian's family, education, or of her life before becoming an anchoress are not known; it is unclear whether her actual name was Julian. Preferring to write anonymously, and seeking isolation from the world, she was nevertheless influential in her lifetime. Julian is today considered to be an important Christian mystic and theologian. Many books are written about her and reflections on her theology given at retreats.



## Father Richard Rohr: recounts the circumstances of Julian's mystical experiences

“Ever since I discovered Julian of Norwich so many decades ago, I have considered her one of my favorite mystics. Each time I return to her writings, I always find something new. Julian experienced her sixteen visions, or “showings” as she called them, all on one May night in 1373 when she was very sick and near death. As a priest held a crucifix in front of her, Julian saw Jesus suffering on the cross and heard him speaking to her for several hours. Like all mystics, she realized that what Jesus was saying about himself, he was simultaneously saying about all of reality. That is what unitive consciousness allows us to see.

Afterwards, Julian felt the need to go apart and reflect on her profound experience. She asked the bishop to enclose her in an anchor-hold, built against the side of St. Julian's Church in Norwich, England. Julian was later named after that church. We do not know her real name, since she never signed her writing. (Talk about loss of ego!) The anchor-hold had a window into the church that allowed Julian to attend Mass and another window so she could counsel and pray over people who came to visit her. Such anchor-holds were found all over 13th- and 14th-century Europe.

Julian first wrote a short text about the showings, but then she patiently spent twenty years in contemplation and prayer, trusting God to help her discern the deeper meanings to be found in the visions. Finally, she wrote a longer text, titled Revelations of Divine Love. Julian's interpretation of her God-experience is unlike the religious views common for most of history up to her time. It is not based in sin, shame, guilt, fear of God or hell. Instead, it is full of delight, freedom, intimacy, and cosmic hope. How did she retain such freedom? Maybe because she was not a priest, ordained to speak the party line?

As I read her words lately, what strikes me is the similarity between Julian's time and our own. Here is how Episcopal priest and scholar Mary Earle describes Julian's fourteenth-century context”:

“Julian lived at a time of vast social, [religious,] and political upheaval, incessant wars, and sweeping epidemics. Norwich, with a population of around 25,000 by 1330 ... was struck viciously by the plague known as the Black Death. At its peak in the late 1340s in England, it killed approximately three-fourths of the population of Norwich. A young girl at this time, Julian was certainly affected in untold ways by this devastation. When the plague returned, she was about nineteen. [1]

In her anchor-hold, Julian certainly would have recognized the spiritual benefits of contemplation, such as the awakened ability through solitude to be personally present to divine love. Yet we must remember that she also let God's love flow right through her to those on the street requesting her counsel, and to us through her writings.

## Patrick Craig St Paul's Singer: His favourite Music - part 2.

### Alleluia songs – Ascension

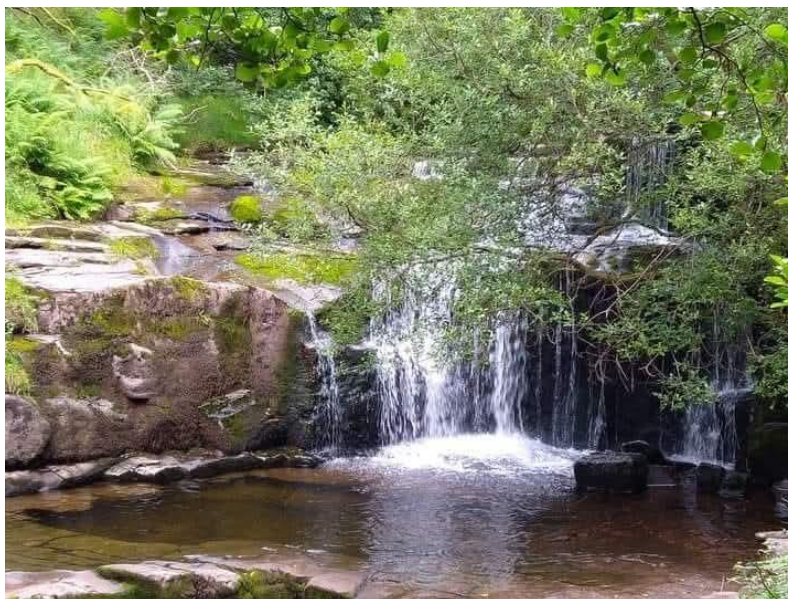


Ascension music is full of trumpets and triumphant Alleluias but there is a poignant element in the Ascension story that is about separation and loss.

The first Ascension anthem I got to know as a young chorister was Peter Philips' *Ascendit Deus* - a joyful interpretation of that day Jesus' feet disappeared into the clouds. It uses upward vocal leaps and dizzying waltzing Alleluias to tell the story.

It was much later that I found out about the sacrifices Philips made in order to stay loyal to the Catholic faith he had learned as a chorister here at St Paul's Cathedral at a time when England was a Protestant country. His choirmaster Sebastian Westcott oversaw an extraordinary period in the history of St Paul's Choir when the Choristers became the Children of Paul's after Evensong and would mutate into an acting troop performing plays to the great and the good across the Capital, including Queen Elizabeth herself. Westcott was imprisoned as a recusant by the Bishop of London in November 1577, but was released three months later by Elizabeth who had missed his Children of Paul's Christmas plays so much that she forgave his Catholic leanings. Philips lodged with Westcott after he left the Cathedral Choir that same year, but ended up pursuing his composing career abroad - using the money left him in Westcott's will to travel extensively across Europe, finding work in Brussels, Antwerp and Rome.

That separation from all that he held dear in London in order to stay true to his faith follows in the footsteps of the disciples who were separated from Jesus for the second time on Ascension Day. They were left to figure out how to found a Church on their own, bereft of their risen leader. This Thursday I shall be thankful for the sacrifices of both those first disciples and Peter Philips as they struggled to stay true to their Jesus.



## How We Are

As always, we send our love and prayers to all those who are sick. Please continue to pray for them that they gain in strength and good health; that God's healing hands may be upon them.

Please pray for Festus who is home after having been in hospital for a second operation on his knee. We do hope he makes a good recovery and is back with us soon

We pray for Anita that she is sustained with God's Love and our prayers. We pray for Simon and the care he gives her.

We pray for Daniel, for Keith, Myfanwy; for Chuba Agbim, for Eunice Adiele, recovering from an eye operation, for Gideon Onwutalu, Sir Edmund Onochie. Please keep Kelly's father John in your prayers.

We hold all the above in our hearts that they may be filled with God's healing and, if bereaved, healing in their grief. We especially think of Nwando who died after being ill for few weeks. She is a great loss to us who loved her. We pray specially for her family in their grief and all of her friends who feel her loss keenly.

Please continue to let us know of family members and friends who are sick and would welcome our prayers, either by WhatsApp, email, Kamran@gg-pc.co.uk or by phone, 020 8455 1873

### Topic: Church Wardens' Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8585545365?pwd=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0x0DaDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365 Passcode: J4FbKf **Contact details:** Parish Priest: Revd Kamran Bhatti Office Tel:

020 8455 1873 Website: [www.gg-pc.co.uk](http://www.gg-pc.co.uk)

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Wardens on duty	Service leader	Preacher
14/05/26 <a href="#">Ascension of the Lord</a>	Psalm 47	TBC							
17/05/26 <a href="#">Seventh Sunday of Easter</a>	Psalm 68:1-10	Poppy	Kai	Naila	Daniel	Shaniv	Nehar/Sohail	Rev Ibezim	Rev Kamran
	1 Peter 4:12-14,5:6-11	Cynthia			Ezim				
	John 17:1-11								
24/05/26 <a href="#">Day of Pentecost</a>	Psalm 104:24-34,35b	Conny	Nehar	Alexis	Ifeyinwe	Onyeka	Tony	Jenny	Rev Kamran
	1 Corinthians 12:3b-13	Sim			Onyeka		Bilan		
	John 20:19-23								
31/05/26 <a href="#">Trinity Sunday</a> <b>Bring &amp; Share</b>	Psalm 8	Keith		Cynthia	Nehar	Ruth	Ifey	TBC	Rev Kamran
	2 Corinthians 13:11-13	Elizabeth		Chinwe	Nwadi		Shaniv		
	Matthew 8:16-20								